

## Synergizing Education and Spirituality in Faith-Based Tertiary Institution

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### Abstract

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The formation of a faith-based tertiary institution calls for a synergy between Education and Spirituality. This supposition stems from the biblical viewpoint on educational system as against the myriad of definitions of education. This paper utilizes the conceptual and descriptive approaches to studying the twin-concepts of education and spirituality with the view to strengthening the linkage between them in a faith-based institution specifically given the need for character formation. The Garden of Eden seemed to be the classroom; God being the teacher; Adam and Eve as the students; Nature, the lesson book, while the law of God (morality), manual labor, and nature study constituted the curriculum. This paper suggests a new approach to education: an effective Integration of Faith and Learning (IFL) program premised on Deut. 6:4 – 9 where love for God (6:5) is identified as the *context* and *scope* of the curriculum; the principle of love for God (vertical relationship) as prerequisite for personal relationships, and qualification as a parent and ‘educator’ (horizontal relationship). In essence, the process of the character formation relies greatly on spiritual foundations. Given the forgoing, IFL need be given priority in faith-based tertiary institution.

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**Keywords:** IFL, missional spirituality, faith-based institution, vertical relationship, curriculum

### 1.0 Introduction

According to White (2000), spiritual development (spirituality) is an aspect of true Education. But there appears to be a gulf between these twin phenomena given the myriad definition of education especially. Nevertheless, as against the compartmentalization of education and spirituality into two independent and distinct spheres, continuing education appears to be the most effective means to integrating spirituality in education (Adam, Puig, Baggs and Wolf, 2015). Unarguably, the impact of true education on spirituality and vice versa, cannot and must not be undermined. Given the above, this paper attempts to clarify the twin concepts of spirituality and education considering the ambiguity of these ideas. It focuses on the various aspects of education such as training, learning, and development, as well as quality of spirituality, missional spirituality etc. It further discusses Christian Education as the basis for spiritual formation. Further, the paper captures the impact of Adventist Education on Spirituality, thus suggesting some workable steps to sustaining the symbiotic relationship that should exist between these concepts under study. The study adopts the conceptual as well as descriptive approaches (Ayantayo, 2015), to studying the twin-concepts of education and spirituality with the view to strengthening the supposed relation between them.

### 1.1 Conceptual Clarifications

#### 1.1.1 Education

There seems to be no universally acceptable definition of education. However, as Obikoya notes, educationists agree that education is the development of a person for the acquisition of all round efficiency in various aspects: intellectually, morally, culturally, economically, socially, physically, with the aim of to earn a living and to live a good and useful life (Obikoya, 1996). Although quite comprehensive, Obikoya’s submission is not without some cogent omissions. This could be drawn from the etymology of the word ‘education.’

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Etymologically, education is rooted in two Latin words: *educere* and *educare*. While *educere* means “to lead out”, *educare* means ‘to train’. The former conceives of education as a process that midwifes the innate potentials of the *educand* while the latter approaches education as a process of forming impressions on an empty or blank slate. Put together, therefore, education could be seen first, as a deliberate attempt of the learner or a teacher to control a learning situation in order to bring about the attainment of a desired learning outcome or goal. Second, it involves a process with the objective of attaining positive change. This makes it an all-inclusive term which embraces formal, informal, and non-formal education (Ogunji, 2008).

In relation to the three forms of education, Ogunji further clarifies that formal education is a process of teaching, which involves well-defined and systematic curriculum, instruction given by specially qualified teachers, with definite aims and principles. This form of education takes place in a school system which can be referred to as a specialized agency where formal education takes place. Therefore, it can be said that schooling is a part or vehicle of formal education. Unlike formal education, informal education is incidental and spontaneous and devoid of any conscious effort. Non-formal education is an educational activity that is structured and planned outside the realm of formal education. Nevertheless, its aim is to serve identifiable learning clientele and learning objectives. It is sometimes given through correspondence with certificate given after an evaluation (Ogunji, 2008).

Nevertheless, another challenge ensues from linking education to training. The word training is a universal term that could apply to almost, if not all aspects of human life or endeavor. This probably accounts for why as a term, training means different things to different people, and serves different purposes for different people, institutions, and personal and cooperate entities (Essenhigh, 2000). From a general viewpoint, training is defined as “the action of teaching a person or an animal a particular skill or type of behavior; the process of learning the skills you need to do a particular job or activity.” Its synonyms include instruction, teaching, coaching, tuition, tutelage, schooling, education, pedagogy, drilling, preparation, guidance, inculcation, among others (Cambridge Dictionary, 2014). A cursory look at the synonyms account for why in most cases, training, education, learning and development are so intertwined and used interchangeably that mutual exclusiveness appear quite difficult (Obikoya, 1996). For instance, Ogunji argues that several attempts at defining the term ‘education’ have confused it with schooling, training, learning, and indoctrination (Ogunji, 2008). Such complexities necessitate some level of clarifications. Consequently, an attempt is made to clarify the relationship between learning, development, training and education.

First, Charles defines learning as a process of acquiring knowledge or skill through study, experience or teaching. This process depends on experience and leads to long-term changes in behavior potential. This behavior potential describes the possible behavior of an individual in a given situation in order to achieve a goal (Charles, 2014). Ogunji adds that unlike schooling, learning is not limited to the four walls of an institution. It is a lifelong process which can occur anywhere (Ogunji, 2008). Although mostly informal, there could be formal phases of learning. From learning to talk, walk, run, among others to learning to write, operate a computer, drive a car, to learning to socialize, one continues in the learning process till death. Synthesis report by Melver Consulting shows that the profile of lifelong learning, which emphasizes maintaining access to and participation in continuing education and training throughout life, has been raised by many national reports on learning (Anon, 2004).

Second, development is a broader spectrum which envisages modification of behavior and personality. It is goal oriented – enabling students or employees to attain higher positions. Development is mostly future oriented, focusing on the personal growth of students, apprentices, employees and managers (Kerzner, 2009). A course on employability skills, improving decision making skills, interpersonal competence, and so on, fall under this category.

Third, training increases knowledge and skill for doing a particular job. It bridges the gap between the desired and the actual knowledge, skills and behavior required to carry out a particular job. However, training is job oriented and vocational in nature. In its job-oriented nature, training could be seen as a short term activity designed by management especially for employees or operatives (Charles, 2014). Hence, training results from external motivation in which the participant(s) functions as a reactive process. Vocationally, apprenticeship is a typical example. Whether job-oriented or vocational, the object of training is to produce a definite performance, skill or operation. This accounts for why training virtually occurs in almost every sphere of human endeavors. There is military training which is scientifically and psychologically designed to tear apart the “civilian” in a recruit and build from scratch a proud, physically fit, and dedicated member of the Armed Forces; (Powers, 2014) strength training which aims at solving the problems of muscles and bones weakened through lack of use; (Anon, 2014) tent making, among others.

From the perspective of human resource development and management, Obikoya defines training as “a systematic process of altering the behavior, knowledge, and/or motivation of employees in a direction to increase the trainees’ effectiveness and organizational goal achievement” (Obikoya, 1996:159). On the one hand, Kerzner affirms that the biggest problem facing human resource managers is that of training their new employees (Kerzner, 2009). On the other hand, Karla and Bhatia (2008) confirm that this training is to remedy those deficient of the skills required to meet the established standards of performance and global needs in a given organization. This skill acquisition may be in term of relevant technology or new pre-determined behaviors. In other words, it helps in bringing about positive change in the knowledge, skills and attitudes of employees thereby bridging the gap between what the employee has and what the job demands. In most cases, therefore, training is often used to describe the methods for imparting narrow and specific job related knowledge or skill to employees (Obikoya, 1996). Suffice it to say that institutions of higher learning are not left out in the struggle to properly train their students in IT and other skill-oriented competences not only to properly equip students with necessary skills for effective marketability, but also to boost institutional brand rating.

Since most individuals, companies and cooperate organizations use almost the same basic tools as part of their training methodology (Cole, 2002), what makes one company, entrepreneur, or institution different from the other is in the execution of the methodology. Suffice it to say therefore that training and education can accelerate not only the project management maturity process but also the ability to execute the methodology. On this note, one could say that training or actual learning occurs in three areas: on-the-job experience, education, and knowledge transfer (Kerzner, 2009). As noted earlier, the above conceptual clarifications reveal a level of interconnectedness which could be seen in the following. First, as Charles notes, training, development, and education are essentially the act of making learning occur. Second, education is the formal phase of learning. It is a combination of both training and development. The texts we study, the assignments are part of the formal training phase, while the changes in our attitudes, values, behavior and culture constitute the informal developmental part. Third, although training is part and parcel of education in the sense that the scope of training in a particular field is limited by its objectives, training and education are growth oriented and complementary in nature although in most contexts training deals with specifics while education is holistic.

Fourth, development on its own involves training people to acquire new horizons, techniques or viewpoints. In this process, learning also takes place. Thus, development can be considered the forefront of what many now call the Learning Organization. However, many organizations, managers and institutions use the term education and development interchangeably. It is important to note that training is aimed at meeting present requirements of the organization, while education and development can be construed as relating to future requirements.

### **1.1.2 Spirituality**

For many religionists and theologians, spirituality is about the human person’s relationship with a Supreme Being – known as God or by various names and in different forms in different faith traditions (Souza, 2014: 45). More so, the spiritual also transcends the here and now. It could also be a transcendental God-related meaning that spreads all over the life of a person (Noaparast, 2013). The perception above, limits spirituality to just a vertical relationship. However, spirituality in the words of Mata (2014) is not an easy term to define. In fact, she holds that in literature, there seem to be many attempts at describing it, with scholars agreeing across the board on the difficulty it represents to conceptualize such an eerie and ambiguous concept. In her attempt to survey literature on the concept, arrays of description come to view. Consequently, three components were identified with spirituality. First, spirituality is seen as an innate human characteristic or potential that urges us to search for, and carry out our purpose in life.

Second, spirituality involves a connection to or relationship with our self, others and the divine or transcendent, and lastly, spirituality provides a sense of belonging and being part of something greater than us, beyond the material world we experience with our senses. As a result of the above description, she sees spirituality as “an innate, human characteristic that allows us to connect with transcendence and/or the divine and feel part of the universe” (Mata, 2014:114). This definition is in congruent with Paul’s submission in Ephesians 1:15-16. Here he identifies a vertical and horizontal dimension of spirituality. Nevertheless, over the past years, shift in the understanding that ‘the inner or spiritual life of a person is worthy of greater consideration within education’ has been noticed. And such, consideration is not just limited to formal academic study of religion but rather it is recognition that the “life of the spirit” which is spirituality, has a place in a college student’s development Lindholm, et al., (2012: 115).

Similarly, Sagberg (2014) noted that spirituality is seen, in several articles, as being mainly nurtured in religious education. He holds that, although there had been a close remarkable link between religious education and spirituality, Sagberg, seems disappointed over such emphasis that religious education is the main place where spirituality was nurtured. Nevertheless, it should be noted that spirituality draws on ways of knowing and acting other than the cognitive, and challenges the current emphasis on measurable outcomes (Bowie, 2011). This means that spirituality suggests the interplay between knowledge and action, that is, the application of acquired knowledge. In the cognitive line, trans-rational awareness is usually thought of as spiritual. More so with the affective domain or emotions, the higher or transpersonal affects, such as love and compassion, are usually deemed spiritual, but the lower affects, such as hate and anger, are not.

In addition, the lower needs, such as self-protection, are not often thought of as spiritual, but the highest needs, such as self-transcendence, are (Gunnlaugson&Vokey, 2014). Another quality of spirituality is seen as contemplative practices, such as meditation which seems particularly important for refining spiritual intelligence. Qualities pertaining to spirituality, Wilber (2006b) touches on the importance of love, kindness, humility, tolerance, wholeness, inner peace, feelings of clarity, deep knowing, wonder, connection, inspiration among others (Gunnlaugson&Vokey, 2014: 441).

## 2.0 Christian (Adventist) Education as Basis for Spiritual Formation

Christian education, upon which Adventist education is founded, means more than pursuing a certain course of study or acquiring a particular skill. Instead, it involves the entire human person and a life-long enterprise. White (2000:9) submits: “It is the harmonious development of the physical, the mental, and the spiritual powers.” She presents the Bible – the inspired Word of God, as the source of this education; in whom “are hidden all the hidden treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Col. 2:3). Whereas the world has produced great teachers, men and women of giant intellect and extensive research, people who have stimulated thought and opened to view vast field of knowledge, God remains the greatest Teacher and embodiment of all wisdom and knowledge. This spiritual power is revealed in His Son, Jesus Christ, who is the Light of the world and our Master Teacher.

At a time when concerns over the nature and importance of “higher education” abound, White opines that the true “higher education” is that which is imparted by Him out of whose mouth “come knowledge and understanding” (Prov. 2:6). Hence, she concludes: “All true knowledge and real development have their source in knowledge of God. Wherever we turn, in the physical, mental, or spiritual realms; in whatever we observe and study, apart from the blight of sin, this knowledge is revealed. Whatever line of investigation we pursue with a *sincere purpose* (emphasis supplied) to arrive at truth, we are brought in touch with the unseen mighty Intelligence that is working in and through all. The human mind is brought into communion with the mind of God, the finite with the Infinite” (White, 2000: 9-10).

In establishing a biblical basis for Christian education, White (White, 1952:20-50) identified four schools whose system of education (at least three of them) should serve as a blue print for holistic Christian education today. They are the School in Eden, the School of Israel, the School of the Prophets, and the School of the Hereafter. While the first three apply to our present world, the fourth (the School of the Hereafter) becomes a reality based on the outcome of our involvement and lessons learnt from the former.

### 2.1. The School of Eden

At creation God established a system of education which was to serve as a model for all times. This school was located at the Garden of Eden, which became the classroom. Here, God was the Teacher while Adam and Eve were the students; and nature became the lesson book. The purpose was to model for humanity schools and homes where His word and works should be studied so that the students will upon and beyond graduation constantly reflect His glory.

The curriculum of this school included the law of God (morality), manual labor, and nature study. The first subject was morality. Among the trees of the Garden were two special trees: the “tree of life” and the “tree of the knowledge of good and evil” (Gen. 2:8 – 9, 17). As long as humanity had access to the fruit of the former, perpetual existence is guaranteed. The latter was a test of loyalty and for the purpose of moral growth. Intrinsic in this situation is God’s willingness to allow man the freedom of choice as a free moral being. But such choice was not without consequences; for in the day they eat of it, they shall surely die (Gen 2:16, 17).

The second subject was manual labour. Here, Adam and Eve were assigned the responsibility to care for, and tend the garden. They were to “dress and keep it” (Gen. 2:15). They were not left idle but rather partners with God in sustaining his handiwork (Josiah and Onyezowu, 2014).

The third subject was nature study and the great reality governing it. The laws and operations of nature and the great principles governing the spiritual universe were made open to them. In sum, this school featured detailed studies on the words and works of God. Adam also had the assignment of naming the other creatures (Gen 2:19 – 20) – an assignment that further deepens his appreciation of nature and also broadens his mental capacity through reflex thinking (See Ogunji, 2008:102).

The above curriculum shows a comprehensive representation of the various facets necessary for human development. White notes: “All their faculties were capable of development; their capacity and vigor were continually to increase. Vast was the scope offered for their exercise, glorious the field of research. The mysteries of the visible universe – the wondrous works of Him who is perfect in knowledge” (Job 37:16) – invited their study. Face-to-face, heart-to-heart communion with their Maker was their high privilege.” However, these students exercised their freedom of choice to their detriment. They ate the fruit of the forbidden tree and were expelled from the school. The fallout of this incidence led to some adjustments in the education system in the effort of winning back God’s ideal school.

## 2.2. Post-Edenic Education

In the days after the expulsion of Adam and Eve, the next educational model was the School of Israel. In this model, the parents were the teachers, the family was the school and their children were the students. It is however important to note that in their social and national development the Hebrews passed through several clearly marked cultural stages worthy of note in connection with their educational history.

At the earliest point at which the Old Testament gives us any knowledge of them, they, like their ancestors, were nomads and shepherds. In these earliest cultural periods, both the nomadic and the agricultural, there was no distinct separation between the spheres of religion and ordinary life. To the people, relation with Yahweh was conceived in simple fashion as involving on their part the obligation of filial obedience and loyalty (as seen in Abraham’s response to both leave his country and also sacrifice his only son, Isaac). Yahweh on His part was committed to providing parental care over them as His people. The family was the social unit and the father served as the head and also custodian of religious authority and leadership (White, 2000; Warren, 2003; Ogunji, 2008; Nwaomah & Dickson, 2012). The tribal head or patriarch in turn combined in himself the functions which later were differentiated into those of priest and prophet and king. It is worthy of mention that their nomadic life provided for industry as they made tents and raised altar for both settlement and the worship of Yahweh respectively. Hence their developmental circle touched all spheres.

During the Mosaic era, the wilderness sojourn provided a serious opportunity for the reeducation of the Jews. This was essential because the long stay in Egypt resulted in a deep slack in their knowledge of God making cooperation difficult. It is no surprise that rebellion and unbelief (Num. 12 -13) characterized the wilderness experience. And God through Moses trained them in the various area of life required for a blissful stay in the Promised Land. In this school therefore knowledge of God and industry, which included sanitary studies, was prominent.

In relation to the curriculum, Ogunji (2008) noted that in this era, the law of God was an essential subject. Parents were to practice it and teach their children (Deut. 6:6, 7). Industrial education was taught through the building of the sanctuary (Ex. 25:8; 31:1 – 6). Sanitary studies were also important in the curriculum for the purpose of public health and environmental sustainability. Further, sacred history and manual labour featured prominently in the overall plan. Military training on how to overwhelm their enemies also became an issue of importance (White 2000).

It is important to note that there was real instruction, all of which, moreover, was given in a spirit of devout religious earnestness and of reverence for the common religious ceremonies and beliefs, no matter whether the subject of instruction was the simple task of husbandry or of some useful art, or whether it was the sacred history and traditions of the tribe, keeping to festivities, or the actual performance of its religious rites. To save the nation from collapse in the days of the Judges, the educational system witnessed a shift in paradigm. In this era, Samuel became the point man through whom the School of the Prophets were established. This however did not cancel the home school and the role of parents as first teachers.

In the School of the Prophets, the students were called sons of the prophets. Here the prophets communicated to the people the message from God through direct inspiration. God was the Teacher of this subject. Among others, the school served as barrier to widespread corruption; provide for the mental and spiritual welfare of the youth, and provide the prosperity of the nation by providing men and women who rule with the fear of the Lord as leaders and counselors.

Ogunji (2008), Warren (2003), and White (2000) observe that from the time of Samuel to the time of Elijah and then Elisha, the Schools of the Prophets were located at Ramah, Kirjath-jearim, Bethel, Jericho, and Gilgal (2 Kings 2:3; 4:38ff). The curriculum was also expanded to include studies on the law of God and how to obey the teachings of the Holy Spirit. It was however important for students in this school to learn a trade and training in practical life (2 Kings 6:1 – 7). The establishment of the kingdom and the beginnings of city and commercial life were accompanied by more radical cultural changes, including the differentiation of religious from other social institutions, the organization of the priesthood, and the rise and development of prophecy. Elijah, the Tishbite, Amos, the herdsman from Tekoa, Isaiah, the son of Amoz, were all champions of a simple faith and ancient religious ideals as over against the worldly-wise diplomacy and sensuous idolatry of the surrounding nations. Under the monarchy also a new religious symbolism developed.

Under the teaching of the prophets the ideal of personal and civic righteousness was moved to the very forefront of Hebrew religious thought. Beyond individual educational attainment, the prophets became teachers and agencies of national and social reformation. Such education was of high standard seeking national integrity and worth and Israel was required to follow its prescriptions or be rejected by Yahweh. During and after the exile, the study of the law remained paramount. This was followed with industry which was evident in the rebuilding of the Temple in the fifth century B.C.E. Ezra and Nehemiah became teachers of the law. Their educational effort brought sanity and moral consciousness among the Jews.

In its later development, Warren (2003) observes that the Synagogue became the center for both primary and secondary education. Sopherism (scribism) also developed alongside. The emergence of the synagogue gatherings provided further settings for offering training in at least minimal levels of reading literacy as required for reading the sacred text in the synagogue services. Also, spiritual instruction and moral guidance were taught to children through the synagogue organization during the week. For the NT period this is the likely source for any educational training outside the home that Jesus and His disciples would have had. Jesus in His time made good use of these learning centers (Matt. 26:55). By the time of the Mishnah, eminent rabbis had their own schools of higher learning known as *bêtmidrāš* 'house of study.' From the foregoing, one may conclude that the goal of education as illustrated in the bible and the life of the Jews are: (1) to concretize moral and cultural values into accepted behavior; (2) to transmit knowledge and skills from generation to generation; (3) to increase knowledge and skills. White (2000) notes that the discipline and training that God appointed for Israel was designed to cause them, in all their ways of life, to differ from the people of other nations.

In exchange for the pomp and self-indulgences of heathen nations, they rejected this peculiarity, which should have been regarded as a special privilege and blessing. Consequently, God's plan of education was set aside, His authority disowned. Nevertheless, the experiences of Israel were recorded for our instruction (1 Cor. 10:11). With us, as with Israel of old, success in education depends on fidelity in carrying out the Creator's plan. Adherence to the principles of God's Word will bring as great blessings to us as it would have brought to the Hebrew people.

### **3.0 The Spirituality of Christian (Adventist) Education**

The spirituality of Christian education hinges on genuine love. White (2000:11) writes: "Love, the basis of creation and of redemption, is the basis of true education. Such love is evident in the law of God. The first and great commandment is, "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind." (Luke 10:27). *To love Him, the infinite, omniscient One, with the whole strength, mind, and heart, means the highest development of every power which aims at restoring the image of God in the mind and soul.* The second commandment is like the first, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." (Matt. 22:39). The law of love calls for the *devotion* of body, mind, and soul to the service of God and humanity. This service, which is missional in nature, brings the greatest blessing to ourselves. White (2000:11) further notes: "Unselfishness underlies all true development. Through unselfish service every faculty receives the highest cultivation. More and more fully we become partakers in the divine nature."

Since God is the source of all true knowledge, as earlier noted, the first object of education is to direct our minds to His own revelation of Himself. Adam and Eve received knowledge through direct communion with God. They learned of Him through His works. But sin cut short the divine privilege of a face-to-face communication with God. Although marred and defiled by sin, nature reflects dimly the glory of God, the Creator. Nevertheless, God has given us a fuller revelation of Himself in His written Word (Rev. 1:1, 2), and the fullest revelation of Himself in the living Word, Jesus Christ (John 1:14) (White, 2000; Taylor, 2012). Such knowledge should be given the highest place in education. To obtain an education worthy of the name, we must receive a knowledge of God, the Creator, and of Christ, the Redeemer, as they are revealed in the sacred Word.

Accordingly, Jones (n.d) submits: The purpose of Christian education is to build up Christians. Nothing that is not Christian can ever properly be brought into the education of a Christian, any more than can anything that is not Christian be properly brought into any other phase of the life of the Christian. Therefore, the Book of Christianity – the Bible – must be the standard of Christian education; it must be the test of everything that enters into the education of a Christian; and it must supply all that is needed in the education of the Christian. And this contemplates education in the highest, broadest, and best sense – the all-round, practical development of the individual, mentally, physically, and morally.

Christ, the fullest manifestation of God, was revealed that the misconstrued image of God be restored on earth. He came to set aside all false teachings by which those who claimed to know God has misrepresented Him. He came to manifest the nature of God is a law of love, an expression of the Divine Goodness. He showed that in obedience to its principles is involved the human happiness of everyone, and with it the stability, the very foundation and framework, of human society. God's law is given as a hedge and shield. Fidelity to God and His law also involves fidelity to humans. Christ came to demonstrate the value of the divine principles by revealing their power for the regeneration of humanity. Against the secular knowledge of the 'scholars' of His time, Jesus gained education directly from the Heavenly-appointed sources – from useful work, from the study of the Scriptures and of nature, and from the experiences of life. Thereafter, He went forth to His mission, exerting upon men, women, and children an influence to bless, a power to transform, such as the world had never witnessed (White, 2000:48, 49).

To this extent, spiritual formation is the process by which the character and person of Christ is being formed in a person. Many contemporary writers emphasize the imperative of spirituality having missional outcomes (Cronshaw, 2012). In other words, spirituality must have implications for mission. How is one's spirituality beneficial to others? Are we conformed to the image of Christ for the benefit of others? Being shaped into the likeness of Jesus Christ, through the work of the Holy Spirit, in the community of faith, is it for the sake of the world? In essence, spirituality is meant for the purpose of mission since a fruitful mission relies on spiritual foundations. Nevertheless, such genuine spirituality will include missional action as well as contemplative reflection (Cronshaw, 2012). Missional spirituality is taken to mean 'messianic spirituality' or spirituality in everyday life, which goes beyond spiritual devotion in private and individual practices, attendance to church but focuses on living for the Messiah who is interested in what is happening seven days a week (Cronshaw, 2012).

Messianic spirituality refuses to extract people from the world, but encourages them to exercise their responsibilities in the world with attentiveness to God's purposes for the world. That is to say, the task of God's people, then, is to be at home with God (in spirituality) as they also serve [God's] agenda in the world (in mission). Missional spirituality is not content with quiet contemplation without active engagement. It goes outward to serve the world, as well as inward to draw close to God (Cronshaw, 2012).

In the midst of the busyness of mission and everyday life, it is crucial to pause for silence and solitude and to ponder where God is at work. The attentiveness of contemplation is essential to understand ourselves and the world, and to begin to expand our idea of God. One of the ways to contemplate could be in devotional practices which nurture contemplation and attentiveness, and makes pace for reflection. Humility, gratitude and Sabbath, journaling, solitude, silence, slowness, fasting, spiritual warfare, pilgrimage, silent retreats, liturgy, worship, and meditation are also regarded as elements of contemplative spirituality. Jesus modeled a spirituality of retreat and engagement, often teaching, healing and eating with all sorts of people, but also praying and seeking guidance in solitary places (Cronshaw, 2012: 17, 18).

#### **4.0 Impact of Faith-based Education on Spirituality**

According to the findings of Adam, Puig, Baggs and Wolf (2015), five significant hindrances to spirituality have been identified.

First amongst these, is the lack of information regarding the difference between the two constructs - religion and spirituality. It is a fact that one could be religious but not spiritual (Titus 1:16). Second, educators do not find spirituality as personally relevant. Third, many educators underestimate the role of spirituality in their profession. Fourth, spirituality to some educators is not salient in their own cultural backgrounds and identity so it makes no sense to them. Finally, some educators tend to avoid discussing spirituality for fear of violating the law or blurring the boundaries of professional ethical competence (Adam, Puig, Baggs & Wolf, 2015).

On the other hand, alongside missional interest, there has also been a growing interest in spirituality and spiritual formation. Churches need to communicate with a society that is open to spirituality and even inspired by Jesus, but unsure about church. After centuries of secularizing influence, the Western world is experiencing a re-enchantment that invites churches to respond. And church leaders are realizing their own need to foster spirituality, for sustainable ministry and to genuinely have experience of God to share.

In response to the above quagmire, the Seventh-day Adventist philosophy of education provides for the Integration of Faith and Learning (IFL). To many Adventist educators, this core concept is a distinctive and essential ingredient in Christian education. Taylor (2012) presents a well-articulated article on the biblical foundation of IFL. Given the centrality of Scriptures in Adventist theology, IFL has strong biblical support. Here, Taylor highlights the contours of the biblical foundation of IFL as basis for enhancing the spirituality of both the teacher and the student thus: (1) the formation of the Christian mind, (2) the comprehensiveness of life and learning, (3) the interconnectedness of life and learning, (4) a comprehensive, whole-person education program, mediated through (5) divinely appointed instrumentalities and resulting in (6) a faith-nurturing perspective for content and method.

#### 4.1 Formation of the Christian Mind

Barring all other alternatives, the key concept of IFL is embedded in Philippians 2:5: “Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus” (Phi 2:5 NKJ). Set in the context of the incarnation, this passage asserts that human beings can choose to acquire a Christian mind, that is, a radically different way of approaching life and learning. Evident in this imperative is the fact that believers, Christian educators and students, are under obligation to undergo a personal, transformational process – receiving the mind of God. Further, the passage affirms that Christians must think *christianly*, endeavoring to view all things from God’s perspective, guided by the Holy Spirit. Such transformation by the power of the Holy Spirit is critical because there are two types of individuals: the natural person, who lacks discernment of spiritual things, and the spiritual man or woman, who discerns all things from a spiritual viewpoint (1 Cor. 2:14 – 16).

Paul submits that it is the renewal of the human mind that makes the difference. This is critical because the carnal mind’s orientation runs contrary to God and His truth, while the spiritual mind incorporates an eternal, supernatural, and integrated view.

Hence the level of one’s spiritual-mindedness is dependent on the level/depth of his or her spiritual devotion – surrender to God and the leading of the Holy Spirit, which in turn determines the basis for an individual’s actions. Critical to this is constancy of our faith commitment in God, the giver of wisdom. On the contrary, the double-minded person cannot receive wisdom from God. Such unwavering faith commitment, evidenced in singleness of mind (Phil 3:13, 14), lies at the heart of the Christian experience. There is no middle ground.

#### 4.2 Comprehensiveness of Life and Learning

Singleness of mind brings about comprehensive, Christ-centered view of life and learning. It is altogether easy to lapse into dualistic forms of thinking, setting up false dichotomies, such as mercy versus justice, liberty versus responsibility, love versus authority, student versus subject, and faith versus learning. This produces fragmented thinking and a compartmentalized, polarized life. Perhaps the most dangerous dualism, however, is to define certain aspects of life as spiritual and others as secular. This, Taylor (2012) argues may cause one to apply secular thinking even on sacred things – such as baptisms, offerings, and Christian education. To this, the Word of God emphasizes that we must “put on the new *man* who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him, where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave *nor* free, but Christ *is* all and in all.” (Col. 3:10, 11, NKJ). Such comprehensive view of life eliminates any spiritual/secular dichotomy.

This totality of Christ, which permeates every aspect of life, is echoed in other passages thus: “Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.” (1Co 10:31 NKJ); “And whatever you do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.” (Col. 3:17 NKJ).



On the other hand, Paul highlights this comprehensiveness of thoughts and action thus: “We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ” (2Co. 10:5 NIV). This is crucial because education programs are comprised of courses; courses are made up of topics, topics of concepts, and concepts of ideas. Consequently, if every thought is in submission to Christ, this means that every class period, every subject area, and indeed the entire educational experience recognizes and embraces the Lordship of Christ. Taylor (2012:10) submits that “a comprehensive view of life and learning, in which all things are viewed within a spiritual framework, yields significant implications for Christian education.”

### 4.3 The Interconnectedness of Faith, Learning, and Life

The intertwined nature of faith, learning, and life is evident in Romans 10:17: “So then faith *comes* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” (NKJ). Here, faith and learning are linked through the Word of God. It is not sufficient to merely know the truth, or even to believe it. There must be a life response as James submitted that “Faith without works is dead” (Jam 2:20, 26 NKJ). Such faith does not result from blind devotion or unfounded belief. Rather, faith is a reasonable commitment, based upon evidences of God’s trustworthiness. This faith is built on individual understanding of God that includes both the theological – knowing *about* God, and the relational – knowing God *personally*. It is complimented by confidence in God’s revelation of His truth, His character, and His plan. On the other hand, learning yields a transformation in knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, and/or lifestyle. This can bring about the renovation of heart, mind, and being. From a Christian perspective, this transformation is brought about through a personal encounter with Jesus, as led by the Holy Spirit. Consequently, a productive life is now one that transforms knowledge into practice; a meaningful life filled with love toward God and humanity, and an eternal life which extends relationships and learning into eternity. Therefore, integration of faith, learning, and life occurs when Christian beliefs and values provide the focus and core of the academic endeavors; when educators seek to relate Christianity to the full range of human existence and culture (Taylor, 2012).

### 4.4 A Comprehensive Educational Program

Effective IFL program is premised on Deut. 6:4 – 9. Here, Taylor (2012) presents a comprehensive educational program germane for drawing principles and significances for quality home and public education. First, he identifies unreserved love for God (6:5) as the *context* and *scope* of the curriculum. Here, the principle of unreserved love for God (vertical relationship) as prerequisite for personal relationship with Him (which manifests in total obedience to His will), and qualification as a parent and ‘educator’ (horizontal relationship) is set out. Second, Taylor sees God’s written word, the Holy Scriptures (Revelation 1:1, 2); the illustrated word, as seen in God’s created works (Psalm 19:1); and the living Word, Jesus Christ (John 1:14), as the *source* and *instruments* of the educational program. These divine words, he noted, constitute the great unifying power in Christian education. They transform learning and life.

This is evident in Paul’s letter to Timothy, All scriptures is given by the inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work (2 Timothy 3:16, 17). Added to these *instruments* is the committed teacher(s) of which the parents are the first. Deuteronomy categorically stipulates the condition for qualification: “These words which I command you today shall be in your heart (6:6).” Commenting on this, Taylor affirms that “the words of God must first be internalized in the teacher’s life. One simply cannot share something he or she does not have” (Taylor, 2012:10, 11). There are conceivably two educational principles here: (1) For home and/or public Christian education to achieve its divine purpose, it must be founded upon and executed in line with the dictates of God’s written words, created works, and living Word; (2) The human *instrument* must be matured in his or her knowledge of God’s written words, created works, and living Word, with a deep and sincere commitment to follow its dictates.

Third, Deuteronomy 6:7 specifies the *process* and *setting* of biblically based education. Here Taylor notes that to teach diligently requires effort, perseverance, and commitment to excellence. This calls for model and method. Such instruction, he notes, incorporates both receptivity and activity – “sitting” and “walking.”

It takes place in the teacher’s house, the classroom, and along the road, through real-life learning encounters that link theory and practice throughout the spiritual learning experience. Furthermore, certain key moments are identified – “when you rise up” and “when you lie down.” According to him, given that the most important aspect of life is one’s relationship with God, this may suggest setting aside prime segments of time, within the school day as well as class period, for personal or corporate worship experiences (Taylor, 2012).

The next principle underscores the need for the dogged willingness and commitment of the human *instrument* to repeatedly inculcate the desire to love and obey God as the one and only true God every day, and at every available moment at home and outdoors.

By implication, this principle suggests that this human *instrument* (primarily the parents) will have available to either engage the child in an activity or be involved with the child's activities, which in turn creates room for and enhances companionship. This kind of parental/teacher involvement requires physical presence and time, it does not occur by proxy.

Fourth, Taylor (2012) underscores the curriculum *dimensions* of the educational program as evident in verses 8 and 9. This involves four components: to bind them (the three aspects of God's word as earlier identified) as a sign on the hand; as frontlets between the eyes; to write them on the doorposts of the house, and on the gates. From a metaphorical viewpoint, he argues that each of the four components has a broader application to a specific dimension of life. Hence God's words are to be on our hands, guiding our actions and physical development. They are to be before our eyes, directing our thoughts and intellectual growth, and on the "doorposts" and "gates" to guide both the student's spiritual and social development (Taylor, 2012: 11). The last principle challenges the human *instrument* to engage a variety of *dimensions* and occasions in his or her effort at educating the hand, head, and heart of the child/student.

#### 4.5 Divinely Appointed Instrumentalities

The Bible identifies the Holy Spirit, parents, priest, and prophets, and pastor-teachers as principal instrumentalities in the teaching/learning process. Of these, the Holy Spirit is paramount: "But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you" (John 14:26 NIV). However, the Spirit mediates through other divinely appointed instrumentalities such as the home, where parents constitute the first teachers; the priest and prophets, scribes and others as earlier noted in this paper. Nevertheless, in biblical paradigm, teachers are but representatives of the Master Teacher: "If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen" (1Pe 4:11, NIV).

#### 4.6 Faith Perspectives for Content and Method

An understanding of the fact that divine truth and values form the bedrock of the educational experience, which is rooted in and mediated through the Word of God, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and illustrated most clearly in the life and teachings of Jesus determines and overrules the content and method of education and faith integration. Because all truth in every subject area is ultimately God's truth (James 1:17), students must connect each topic they study to the Source of Truth.

The biblical model of education also emphasizes the role of moral values in character formation: "He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? "To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God?" (Micah 6:8, NIV). Taylor (2012) notes that obedience to this directive is best accomplished through the process of values formation and maturation that involves analysis, reflection, and action.

The Apostle Paul describes well this vast, value-laden agenda: "Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable-- if anything is excellent or praiseworthy-- think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me-- put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you (Phi 4:8, 9 NIV). This perspective regarding God-driven truth and values must therefore permeate every subject area – science, arts, and so on.

#### 5.0 Conclusion

Today, as it were with Israel of old, successful education is dependent upon fidelity in fulfilling the creator's plan (White, 2000). Given the fact that God is the source of true education which has its basis as love, and that Spiritual formation is the process of the character and person of Christ being formed in a person (Rom. 10:17), it therefore follows, that Education and spirituality must have implications for mission.

In essence, spirituality which could be an aftermath of true education (Adventist education) must exist for the purpose of mission since a fruitful mission relies on spiritual foundations. Nevertheless, this paper recommends that the integration of faith and learning especially in Adventist Institutions of Learning be given a priority if the Adventist Educational mission "to redeem and restore humanity to God" must be attained.

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